



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

CALIFORNIA DIVISION

980 Ninth Street, Suite 400

Sacramento, CA. 95814-2724

June 20, 2001

IN REPLY REFER TO

HDA-CA

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Mr. Jeff Morales, Director  
CALTRANS, 1120 N Street  
Sacramento, California 95814

Attention: Federal Resources Branch, Room 3500  
For Rambabu Bavirisetty

Dear Mr. Morales:

**SUBJECT: TCAG 2000/01 FTIP AMENDMENT No. 3**

We have completed our review of the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) Amendment No. 3 to its 2000/01 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) submitted by your letter dated May 9, 2001. The amendment was adopted by TCAG on February 26, 2001. This amendment adds two Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Program (CMAQ) projects.

Our review of Amendment No. 3 indicates that the project data for the proposed program modifications have not been entered into the California Transportation Improvement Program System (CTIPS) database. Our approval of the California FY 2000/01 to 2002/03 Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP) on October 6, 2000, noted the importance of the California Department of Transportation continuing to work with the transportation planning agencies to ensure that CTIPS reflect complete and accurate data on programmed projects. We continue to believe that CTIPS, when used properly, offers a practical and effective programming tool for streamlining the programming process and enhancing the development and dissemination of program information. We recognize that unusual circumstances may occasionally arise that prohibit the entry of program information data into the CTIPS database prior to the FTIP modification request, however, we would expect the processing of amendments under these circumstances to be the exception rather than the rule. We encourage you to share our concerns regarding the lack of project information in CTIPS for this FTIP amendment with TCAG. To minimize delays in the FTIP amendment approval process in those instances where the project data has not been entered into CTIPS, we encourage both Caltrans and the responsible planning agency to describe, in the request for approval of the amendment, the circumstances that have prohibited the project data entry into the CTIPS database.

We accept this TCAG amendment in accordance with 23 CFR 450 and find that the amendment was developed based on a continuing, cooperative, comprehensive transportation planning process in accordance with 23 USC 134 and Section 5303 of the Federal Transit Act (49 USC 53). The approved changes made to the program by this amendment (except as noted above) are

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exempt from the requirement that a conformity determination be performed. Therefore, we find this FTIP to conform to the applicable State Implementation Plan (SIP).

This finding has been coordinated with the Region Nine office of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the regional office of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in accordance with the procedures outlined on the Memorandum of Understanding, dated March 8, 1996, on single mode FTIP amendments.

This letter also constitutes approval, and inclusion of TCAG's FTIP Amendment No. 3 into California's 2000/01-2002/03 Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP).

Sincerely,



For  
Michael G. Ritchie  
Division Administrator

cc:

TCAG FTIP Binder w/ Caltrans Letter

FSTIP Binder

FTA, Paul Page

EPA, Karina O'Connor

TCAG

Caltrans:

Federal Resource Branch, Dick Petrie

Office of Local Programs, Terry Abbott

Transportation Programming, Greg Wong (Fax: 916-654-2738)